

not be counted on to rise to the defence of an unfamiliar political system. The people at large lacked the democratic tradition. In many instances, it is probable that the people felt more at home with a government which told them what to do than one in which they had to exercise the freedom of choice.

There was the tendency to exclude the masses from any effective share in political life. There developed among the nationalist elites a "Messiah" complex by which they could justify any deviation from democratic principles. Nationalist parties and movements came to be built around dominant personalities rather than on programmes or ideologies. This personalisation of loyalties may be attributed to the lack of social experience and sophistication of the masses. There was the age-old assumption that the few at the top were naturally masters of the people and the custodians of power.

situation

There seems to be no general agreement regarding the appropriate form of democracy. Even certain communist states claim to be democratic. Carl Marx claimed that the West was characterised by competition among social parties which to him was a feud between classes, but he believed true democracy will exist only when one class eliminates the overwhelming masses. A Norwegian political scientist has counted about 300 types of democracy. Today, democracy is associated with progress. No form of government is a panacea for all human ills. In comparison with the remnants of the past, democracy has justified itself.

Democracy is one of the rare types of government instituted for the purpose of reducing inhumanity and raising hope. It recognizes the dignity of the human being and guarantees the equality of the individual. It gives attention to individualism and helps to create an open society that provides political, social and economic opportunities for the masses.

However, democracy has endowed mankind with many advantages. The primacy of the country is assured, and the sphere of private life will not be invaded except by the due process of law. Democracy continues to spread. The concept of democracy appeals to people. The citizens' consciousness of their rights and responsibilities makes them active participants in the affairs of the state. Democracy ensures the twin principles of equality and liberty. It allows the development of human capacities. It stimulates the interests and energies of all and the prosperity achieved is widely diffused. Democracy precludes revolutions, for people are sovereign and subjects, and the existing government can be removed by peaceful means.

Democracy in Asia and Africa

Among the non-European peoples, the former colonies of the West made the nearest approach to democracy, despite the serious defections later. The faith of their leaders in democracy was shown at the outset in the style of constitutions which they created. In a few countries, headed by India, the constitutions have so far maintained themselves as living realities. It must also be recorded that there was protest against the assumption that Western-style parliamentary institutions are appropriate for non-European peoples. Among the former colonies there has been a shift away from democracy. 1958 was the year of the great collapse. Within a few weeks of the year, Pakistan, Burma, and the Sudan surrendered their civilian governments into the hands of the military who, by varying degrees, abrogated constitutions, postponed elections and abolished or sidetracked political parties.

Independence in these countries meant enfranchisement of large numbers of people. Their expectations were aroused and they hoped for quick economic betterment. Democracy failed to produce results with adequate speed, if the politicians who manipulated the machinery came to be seen as self-interested and corrupt, the masses could